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Bundy Tells Senate Proposed Controls Could Hurt C.I.A.

By RICHARD BURT

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 19—McGeorge Bundy, the White House national security adviser under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, told a Senate committee today that new restrictions imposed on intelligence activities could hamper the Government in its efforts to attract recruits to the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. Bundy, who is now the president of the Ford Foundation, said that he generally supported Congressional efforts to establish a new charter governing the actions of the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies. But he warned that if too many specific prohibitions were inserted into the proposed legislation,

C.I.A. morale and recruitment could be adversely affected.

"If you cannot recruit good people, you cannot have the effective intelligence establishment this country needs," he told the Charters and Guidelines subcommittee of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Mr. Bundy's remarks are the latest in a debate over regulating American intelligence agencies that opened earlier this month when the committee began hearings on a new legislative charter that would set out controls on intelligence-gathering methods.

So far, witnesses before the committee, including three former C.I.A. directors, have supported a new charter but have expressed concern that, in attempting to correct alleged abuses of citizens' rights, it could weaken the effectiveness of intelligence agencies.

Mr. Bundy reflected this concern, saying, "I do think the draft bill lays more emphasis on curbing abuses than the effective collection and dissemination of intelligence." In particular, he expressed doubts about the committee's plan to

place specific restrictions on certain activities, such as assassination and torture, saying that this would implicitly allow the C.I.A. to engage in other actions, such as "arson, kidnapping and mayhem."

In response to questioning by Senator Joe Biden, Democrat of Delaware, Mr. Bundy also questioned a provision in the proposed charter that would allow the White House to separate the functions of the Director of Central Intelligence from direct responsibility over the C.I.A. While Senator Biden argued that this would free the director from managerial responsibilities, Mr. Bundy said it could further weaken agency morale.

Describing the quality of C.I.A. intelligence during the Vietnam war, Mr. Bundy said he did not believe that estimates prepared by the agency had been "co-opted by the Pentagon."

"It is fair to say," he said, "that there were senior officers in the Defense Department who put great reliance on C.I.A. estimates because they were thought to be free from bias."

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